

CONCERT REVIEWS

VERNON AND LEE CONCERT, Duff House, Banff 18th September, 2009

This reviewer considers himself to be a lucky man, because more than two years ago he bought a CD entitled "Reeds United" by the above mentioned David Vernon and Dick Lee and he has been playing it ever since. The combination of piano accordion (Vernon) and clarinets and whistle (Lee) seems, at first sight, unusual. But such is their mastery of their instruments that these two accomplished musicians thrilled and delighted everyone present. Their rapport and little commentaries and asides with the audience charmed us all even more and added to the happy "family feel" of the evening.

Their repertoire ranges through Jewish dance, jazz blues, French musette, South American tangos and even Rossini's "Thieving Magpie" and "William Tell Overture". Both performers are also highly accomplished composers and we were treated to several of their own compositions. One of these, "La Valse Vernon", played at this writer's request, is a delightful, sparkling virtuoso piece which had almost everyone's feet tapping.

These are performers whose timing and interaction in both melodic and rhythmic terms is as near perfect as makes no difference. Dick Lee modestly claimed his "Dickulous" was written by him for bass clarinet when he was in Primary school! There was nothing immature about it and the melody was full of little surprises.

Acker Bilk's "Stranger on the Shore" was done full justice by Dick Lee with the slow, wistful beginning and seagull SFX leading to a change of tempo and mood in the clarinet obbligato later.

As we left, following the encore the audience had demanded by their applause, the "buzz" was in terms like "That was the best ever!"

Dr D F Clark 22/09/09

FRIENDS' DORIC CONCERT

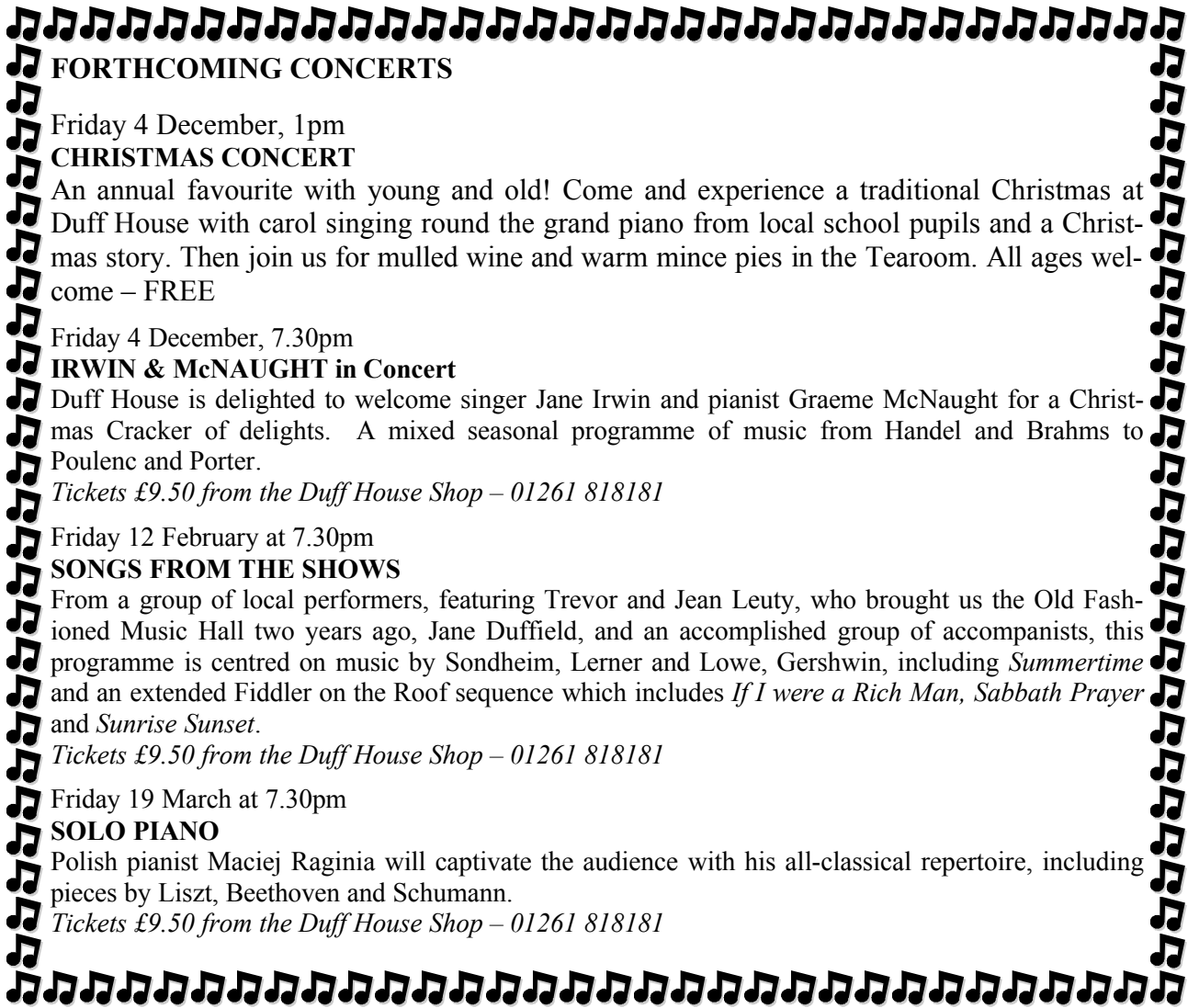
This was an excellent event, with top entertainers from the North-east, including Nicola Auchnie on fiddle, Steven Eddie on accordion, Eric Simpson and Russell Taylor with bothy ballads, rhymes and crack. Geordie Murison was billed to attend, but he was struck down with the 'flu and we were very fortunate that Doug Stewart agreed to stand in at the very last minute. He richly deserves his renown for his verse. All in all, it was a wonderful show with a number of old favourites and some rare examples of old traditional ballads. Nicola and Steven Eddie were on top form, which means excellent, and the pace and style of the show made for a wonderful evening. The verses and anecdotes were very funny and the songs equally poignant and those from other parts of the country understood quite enough to enjoy themselves.

As sometimes happens, there was more quality than quantity about the audience, which was a great shame and a bit embarrassing, since the entertainers had all come to support our charity with no expectation of fees. We had really hoped that many more would have been there, but perhaps we were just unlucky with the evening we chose. We are sorry that so many of you missed it and grateful to those who came.

A financial disaster was averted by the kindness of John Cox, proprietor of the Fife Lodge Hotel, Banff, where the event was held. Seeing that we had only about 25 people in the audience, he generously donated the stovies. As he said with a smile, since he had catered for 75 to 100 people at our suggestion, "I'll be eating stovies for the next weeks!" We can't feel too sorry for him on that score, because they were very good and quite a few took advantage of the chance of seconds, "jist to help John oot, ye ken!"

Thanks to John, we did cover other costs and the event produced a modest surplus. If any of you can tell us where we went wrong, do let us know – as they say, "Answers on a postcard, please!"

Pat and Peter Johnston
Music Sub-group



FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

Friday 4 December, 1pm
CHRISTMAS CONCERT

An annual favourite with young and old! Come and experience a traditional Christmas at Duff House with carol singing round the grand piano from local school pupils and a Christmas story. Then join us for mulled wine and warm mince pies in the Tearoom. All ages welcome – FREE

Friday 4 December, 7.30pm
IRWIN & McNAUGHT in Concert

Duff House is delighted to welcome singer Jane Irwin and pianist Graeme McNaught for a Christmas Cracker of delights. A mixed seasonal programme of music from Handel and Brahms to Poulenc and Porter.

Tickets £9.50 from the Duff House Shop – 01261 818181

Friday 12 February at 7.30pm
SONGS FROM THE SHOWS

From a group of local performers, featuring Trevor and Jean Leuty, who brought us the Old Fashioned Music Hall two years ago, Jane Duffield, and an accomplished group of accompanists, this programme is centred on music by Sondheim, Lerner and Lowe, Gershwin, including *Summertime* and an extended Fiddler on the Roof sequence which includes *If I were a Rich Man, Sabbath Prayer* and *Sunrise Sunset*.

Tickets £9.50 from the Duff House Shop – 01261 818181

Friday 19 March at 7.30pm
SOLO PIANO

Polish pianist Maciej Raginia will captivate the audience with his all-classical repertoire, including pieces by Liszt, Beethoven and Schumann.

Tickets £9.50 from the Duff House Shop – 01261 818181

Do you need help with transport to attend Friends functions?



Could you assist by providing transport for Friends living in your locality?

In either case please contact a committee member or the office at Duff House, 01261 818181



FRIENDS CHRISTMAS PARTY

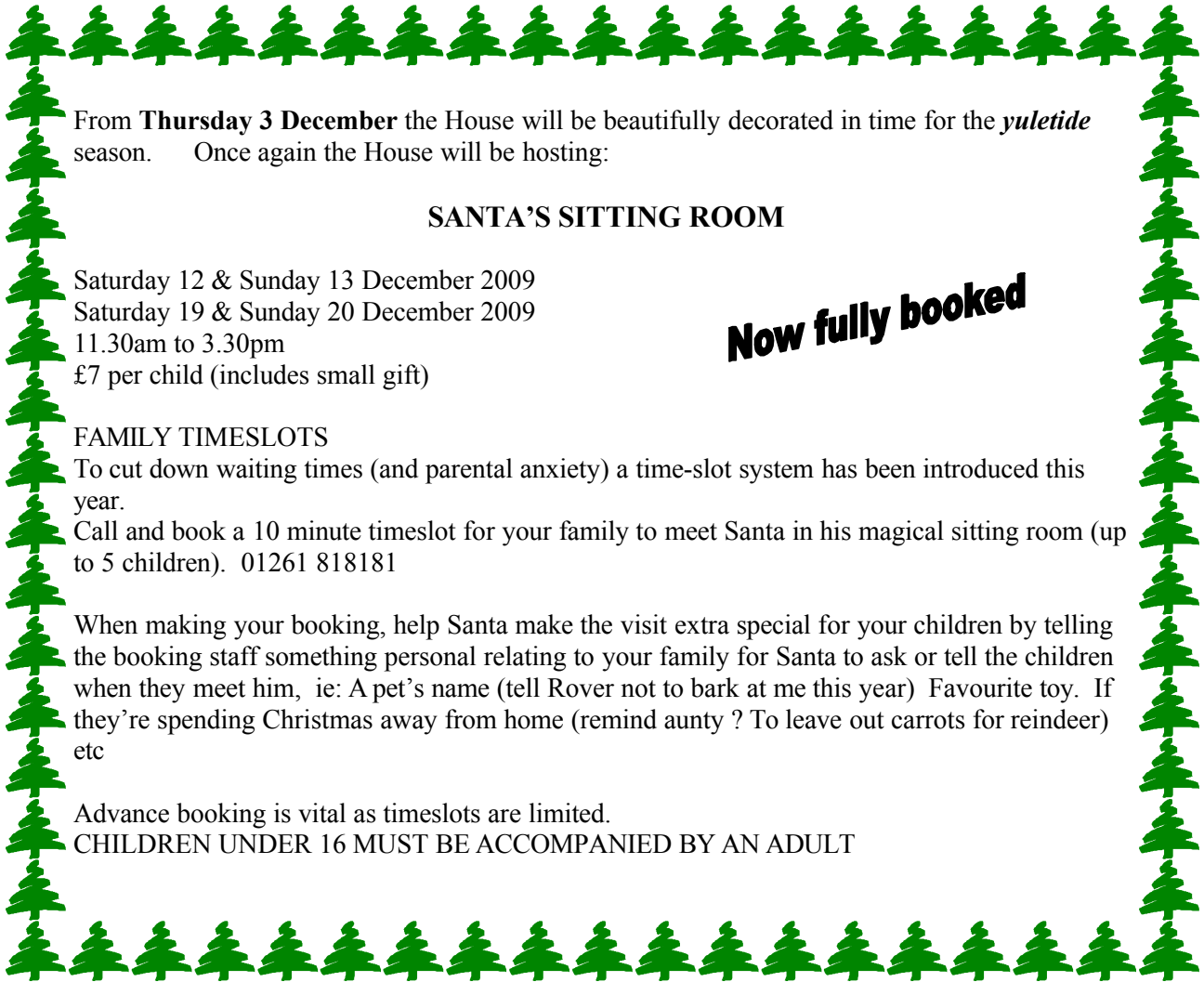
To be held in the delightful DUFF HOUSE with all its Christmas sparkle.

Friday December 11th 2009; 6.30 - 8.30

The evening will include an exciting programme of music with Irene Watt and Graham Whyte, artistes who are multi-talented with harp, piano, fiddle, guitar and singing.

Buffet and wine

Tickets only £8.50. Available from the Duff House shop or Committee members.



From **Thursday 3 December** the House will be beautifully decorated in time for the *yuletide* season. Once again the House will be hosting:

SANTA'S SITTING ROOM

Saturday 12 & Sunday 13 December 2009
Saturday 19 & Sunday 20 December 2009
11.30am to 3.30pm
£7 per child (includes small gift)

Now fully booked

FAMILY TIMESLOTS

To cut down waiting times (and parental anxiety) a time-slot system has been introduced this year.

Call and book a 10 minute timeslot for your family to meet Santa in his magical sitting room (up to 5 children). 01261 818181

When making your booking, help Santa make the visit extra special for your children by telling the booking staff something personal relating to your family for Santa to ask or tell the children when they meet him, ie: A pet's name (tell Rover not to bark at me this year) Favourite toy. If they're spending Christmas away from home (remind aunty ? To leave out carrots for reindeer) etc

Advance booking is vital as timeslots are limited.

CHILDREN UNDER 16 MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT

PROPOSED TRIP TO EDINBURGH

Having established that there is some interest in a Friends trip to visit the Galleries in Edinburgh, we have obtained an enticing outline programme, including a number of privileged visits, and a chance to see behind the scene. Highlights include:-

- special private Curatorial Tours of the National Gallery, the Gallery of Modern Art and the Dean Gallery
- private visit to the NG store at Granton with Anne Buddle
- private visit to Powderhall Bronze
- drinks reception at the National Gallery

With Coach travel to and from Banff, and throughout the visit, and three nights accommodation at the recently refurbished Royal Terrace Hotel, housed in a series of Georgian townhouses, the cost is likely to be around £400 per. person

This includes dinner every night

If you are interested please let the Chairman know before 17th November. Email j.mcewen@tiscali.co.uk , tel.01466 760 742. If there is sufficient response booking forms with a complete itinerary and cost, will be sent out thereafter.

WINTER LECTURES (in brief)

Why not make Thursday lunchtimes an occasion to meet friends for lunch in the Duff House tea room and then stay for the lecture which commences at 2pm in the Long Gallery?

5 November : George Dalgleish, MA, Principal Curator, Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh
Silver: Made in Scotland— an exploration of the silversmith's art from the 16th century to the present.

12 November: Roger Goodyear, DL, Chairman, The Scottish Traditional Boat Festival, Portsoy.
Restoration of the Portsoy Salmon Bothy

19 November: Mrs. Cecilia Penny, Former Head of Child Guidance Unit, Fraserburgh.
A Doric Homecoming

26 November: Abbot Hugh Gilbert OSB, Pluscarden Abbey
Monastic Life in Pluscarden Abbey since the Re-foundation of 1948

3 December: Professor Dr James D Floyd, Formerly of the British Geological Survey, Edinburgh.
The Geology of Banffshire

10 December: Dr Stephen Lloyd, Senior Curator, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh.
The Intimate Portrait: drawings, pictures and pastels from Ramsay to Lawrence— the making of the Exhibition in the British Museum.

17 December: Lieutenant Colonel Ian Shepherd, Secretary, Scottish National War Memorial
The Story of the National Memorial within Edinburgh Castle.

7 January: Mrs Elizabeth Roads, MVO, FSA Scot, Lyon Clerk & Keeper of the Records.
The Court of the Lord Lyon, Edinburgh

14 January: Lieutenant Colonel David Price, OBE, Former Director of Music, Scots Guards.
The History of Military Bands

21 January: Charles A F Burnett, CEng. Naval Architecture, MRINA. BAE Systems, Glasgow
Building Warships on the Clyde

28 January: Gordon Casely, CSTJ, FSAScot. Freelance Journalist
The Railways of Aberdeenshire—the way we were

Entry by admission to House and free to members of the Friends of Duff House.

For details of lectures during February and March please refer to the previously circulated leaflet.

Friends Exhibition 2010: **ART** WORK IN PROGRESS

Ever wondered what is in the mind of the artist when creating work or what influences or circumstances contribute to a project?

The 2010 Friends of Duff House Exhibition may answer some of these questions.

Invited eminent artists will be present or working on pieces in a marquee on the Duff House lawn, 28th - 30th May, providing an opportunity to discuss with the artist the work in progress.

Other interesting projects will be ongoing during this time including an opportunity for children and young people to take part in an art project.

Several pieces of the artists' work will be displayed and on sale in the Long Gallery until the end of the Exhibition in June.

EXHIBITIONS

7 November to 31 January 2010

ROBERT ADAM'S LANDSCAPE FANTASIES:

Watercolours from the permanent collection of the National Gallery of Scotland.

Revealed on the second floor, an undiscovered side to the work of well-known Scottish architect Robert Adam (1728-1792); his landscape fantasies. This exhibition is dedicated to his picturesque landscapes which were made towards the end of his life, purely for his own relaxation and enjoyment. The show will include his spectacular rendition of Cullen Castle and a number of early drawings by his sketching partners Paul Sandy and John Clerk of Eldin. This is a unique opportunity to see the private visions of one of the greatest architects of the eighteenth century.

Thursday 14 January to Sunday 28 March

SAND

In the short time after high tide amazingly intricate patterns are formed as seawater drains from the sand to form tiny deltas – geology in miniature in the making. The artist Sue Edwards says, 'I was not the artist here – just the technician who captured these beautiful, never-to-be-repeated formations with my camera. And it happens every day'

Tearoom. Free Entry.

January to April

THEIR PAST YOUR FUTURE

WWII Exhibition

A display of work in the Long Gallery built around the research carried out by historian and writer Allan Burnett.

Saturday 6 February to Sunday 11 April

DANCE

From the National Gallery of Scotland

Dance is a subject which Edgar Degas is particularly well known for, often painting scenes of dancers backstage or in rehearsal. *A Group of Dancers* is one of his most well known works, showing ballet dancers at rest between rehearsals. This show centres on Degas' 19th century painting and juxtaposes paintings, sculpture, prints and photography from, as well as Degas, artists such as Pablo Picasso, Jean-Antoine Watteau and Diane Arbus.

Thursday 1 April to Sunday 30 May

ALONG THE COASTAL TRAIL

Starting from Fiddle Bow Rock at Portknockie, artist Allan Thistleton takes us along the coastal trail moving on to Cullen Bay, Portsoy Harbour and Banff - with a small diversion along the river Deveron to the Bridge of Alvah. Then it continues on to Gardenstown and Crovie finishing at Pennan. The paintings are oil on canvas in a classical style. Free Entry.

In collaboration with **COAST Festival of the Visual Arts**, 28th to 30th May.

An annual weekend of events that takes place in the beautiful Banffshire coast towns of Banff and Macduff. Admission is FREE to Duff House over the Coast Festival weekend. www.coastfestival.org.uk

Saturday 1 May to Sunday 1 August

COAST ROAD DIARIES

This exhibition on display on the second floor, and its accompanying publication is a fascinating visual and written record of a highly personal project undertaken by artist, Kate Downie, RSA. At its core was a journey around the coast of Scotland and includes paintings, drawings, sketchbook/diaries produced during her travels. The show also includes examples of work by other artists such as Frances Walker and Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, for whom the coast of Scotland provided strong inspiration and about whom Downie writes in the book.